



# State of Connecticut

Volume 2, Issue 2

Fall, 2000

## Latino & Puerto Rican Affairs Commission

*Committed to coordinating and providing access to resources...*

*for the advancement of the Latino & Puerto Rican communities*

### Message from the Executive Director, Fernando Betancourt



Dear Friends,

*I am delighted to be sharing this Fall Issue of our Newsletter with you. We have accomplished so much in the past three months and have so many diverse activities to look forward to in the ensuing months. We have also acquired new staff and will soon be recruiting for one more position.*

*I am so pleased to report the appointment of Ms. Lucy Goicoechea-Hernández as our new Special Projects Director. She will be responsible for the preparation of our quarterly newsletter, the annual report, our annual Gala Awards Banquet and requests for grant funding in support of the myriad projects the Commission undertakes. There will be times when I cannot attend a function due to numerous commitments and she will attend those in my stead. Additionally, we will soon begin recruitment for a Public Information Officer. Look in the local papers and on our website for details. We would appreciate your referrals of viable candidates.*

*We have participated in a variety of activities in support and collaboration with a number of governmental and community agencies that have worked out quite well. For example:*

*Continued on Page 7*

### The Connecticut Higher Education Trust

We are pleased to introduce the Connecticut Higher Education Trust (CHET) a college savings plan that can help put higher education within your family budget.

We are sure you are well aware of the rising cost of higher education, and that is why CHET is more important than ever before.

The CHET program was authorized by the Connecticut General Assembly in 1997, and has recently been enhanced to become

more accessible to families of all income levels. The minimum amount required to

*Continued on Page 5*

#### INSIDE

Chairperson Arroyo's Message.....	2
Dr. Julio Morales and his Vision.....	3
Career Opportunities.....	3
2000 Legislative Session Results.....	4
Latino Leaders Issue Call for Action.....	6

[www.cga.state.ct.us/lprac](http://www.cga.state.ct.us/lprac)

NEWSLETTER

## LPRAC COMMISSIONERS

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**Fernando Betancourt**  
*Executive Director*

**Werner Oyanadel**  
*Legislative Analyst*

**Lucy Goicoechea-  
Hernández**  
*Special Project Director*

**Tersee Flores**  
*Legislative Secretary*

**Vacant**  
*Public Information  
Officer*

## Message from Chairperson Ramón Arroyo



On behalf of the Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission, I would like to take this opportunity to inform you of some of the activities we have undertaken since my last letter to you. We recently celebrated our 3rd annual gala-award dinner this past October and I am happy to announce the success of this event which was attended by six hundred prominent latino and non-latino people from throughout the state.

As part of our efforts to promote legislative initiatives that will benefit the Latino and Puerto Rican residents of our state, we are pleased to report several successes.

→ In our efforts to promote home ownership for low-income Connecticut residents, we supported a

bill to allow low-income people to start individual savings accounts to which the state will contribute matching funds.

→ We supported an increase in the minimum wage, and were pleased that the legislature voted to increase the hourly minimum wage to \$6.40 effective January 2001, and to \$6.70 effective January 2002.

Finally, we are looking for good community activists to come forward to assist the commission in the projects we are working on to improve the quality of life for all of us in Connecticut.

Together we can work to achieve positive outcomes on the issues affecting our community.

Sincerely,

Ramón Arroyo  
Chairperson

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

COMMISSION MEETINGS  
ARE HELD EVERY THIRD  
WEDNESDAY  
OF EACH MONTH AT THE  
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING,  
SUITE 2600  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

5:30 PM -- 8:00 PM

*We are always looking to add to our talent bank and we ask that if you are not already listed, please contact our office to find out how your name can be part of our list. This database is helpful in generating candidates to serve on State Boards and Commissions.*

## Dr. Julio Morales and his vision for Latino Children

*By Werner Oyanadel*

**Dr. Morales received the 2000 Latino of the Year Award in recognition for his accomplishments and contributions on behalf of our community.**

Dr. Julio Morales is a professor at the University of Connecticut's School of Social work. For the past 22 years, Dr. Morales has initiated several new courses in his career. These courses have helped many Latino and non-Latino students gain more knowledge about Puerto Rican culture. His biography is rich with books and journals related to enhancing Latino visibility. His participation in different Boards around New England has given a voice to the needs and contributions of members of our community. Dr. Morales has initiated Latino programs and agencies with the important task of enhancing Latino visibility.

In Connecticut, Dr. Morales co-chaired and co-facilitated an important national conference held at Central Connecticut State University on October 15, 1999. The conference focused on the impact of federal policy on Latino children called "Los Niños de los Barrios" or the

children of our neighborhoods.

This conference highlighted a national crisis in the public child welfare system. That is, more children are entering and lingering in the foster care system. Puerto Rican and other Latino children and families are more vulnerable to out-of-home placement as a result of a lack of access to resources. This is reflected in the high incident of poverty, single headed households, and limited educational and employment opportunities.

It was this important reason that moved Dr. Morales to take the leadership position of organizing a committee primarily of Connecticut Latino advocates. The objective was to bring together practitioners, policy makers, and legislators to discuss the status of Latino children in out-of-home-care, and to exchange information on the best practices and strategies that could impact

the Latino population.

"Connecticut Unido Para Niños Latinos" or Connecticut United for Latino Children is the name of this visionary group -- with a membership of organizations such as the Connecticut Department of Children and Families, Central Connecticut State University, The Village, United Community & Family Services, the Institute for the Hispanic Family, the University of Connecticut School of Social Work and the Latino & Puerto Rican Affairs Commission.

The next steps for this new organization, according to Dr. Morales is to concentrate on two issues:

- > A legislative agenda on behalf of Latino youth and their families;
- > Continue working on the vision, mission, and governance structure of CUPNL.

## CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Casa Myrna Vázquez, Inc. (CMV), the largest provider of comprehensive services to battered women and children in New England, seeks a Chief Financial and Administrative Officer (CFO/CAO). Reporting to the Executive Director, the CFO/CAO will be second in command and bring strategic financial capacity, business savvy, and organi-

zational ability to the leadership mix of the agency.

Inquiries, applications, and nominations should be directed to:  
Amy Tapia  
Isaacson, Miller  
334 Boylston Street, Suite 500  
Boston, MA 02116-3805  
Phone: 617-262-6500 X106  
Fax: 617.262.6509  
Email: atapia@imsearch.com

### HART EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Directs, administers, and coordinates executive director responsibilities consistent with the mission and operations of Hartford Areas Rally Together.

If interested please send your resume to:

HART Search Committee  
C/o Hyacinth Yennie  
227 Lawrence Street  
Hartford, CT 06106

CONTINUES  
ON PAGE 5

## The 2000 Legislative Session Results

*By Werner Oyanadel, Legislative Analyst*

The 2000 Legislative Session ended on Wednesday May 3, 2000 in one of the shortest sessions in the state's history. Yet, there were 1,569 bills introduced in both chambers of the legislature. Due to both a limited amount of time and resources, the Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission focused its time and resources on the following bills:

### **Individual Development**

#### **Accounts --IDA's (HB 5018)**

Establishing a state Individual Development Account Program to promote asset accumulation for low-income workers. An IDA is a savings account into which an eligible individual periodically deposits money that may be matched by public and private sources and used for specific purposes.

**Public Act # 00-192**

### **Affordable Housing**

An affordable housing appeals procedure was enacted this year as a response to the Blue Ribbon Commission recommendations to the legislature. This new law will help increase the affordability of units in "set-aside" developments, reaffirm the "burden of proof" upon towns (in response to an unfavorable state Supreme Court decision), and provide towns with new tools to review applications and enforce compliance. The law will also allow for a three-year moratorium for towns where there is a significant amount of housing developed under the appeals process. However, this moratorium will not apply to nonprofit-sponsored housing that either contains 40 or fewer

units or where 95% of the units are affordable to households at 60% of median income. **Public Act 00-206**

### **Connecticut Housing Trust Fund (SB 46)**

Despite a great advocacy campaign by the Connecticut Housing Coalition --which the LPRAC is part of; the Trust Fund was not established. No funds from the state budget surplus were provided for the creation of this fund. However, as a direct result of the Trust Fund effort, the budget negotiations produced a commitment of \$10 million for affordable housing.

### **Public Housing**

A pilot program to privatize state-financed public housing was repealed. The Coalition urged repeal of the pilot, which allowed sale or lease of public housing developments in three cities, because it failed to provide protections for current residents.

**Public Act # 00-195**

### **Supportive Housing Pilot Initiative**

The Budget provides \$2 million to allow leveraging of federal funds for supportive housing serving people with psychiatric disability or chemical dependency.

**Special Act 00-13**

With the efforts of several advocates and that of LPRAC we were able to defeat a bill that would have effectively allowed landlords to discriminate against prospective tenants with Section 8 vouchers or other housing

assistance. Great victory.

### **Voting Rights Restoration (sHB 5701)**

LPRAC supports a system that allows the restoration of a person's voting rights upon release from prison.

### **Campaign Finance Reform**

(HB 5102) This act would have established a two-step system of public financing for election campaigns. The first part created a voluntary spending limit program for the general election that grants state funding only after (1) a participating candidate's opponent exceeds the spending limit or (2) a participating candidate is the target of an independent expenditure. To participate in the program, a candidate would have to agree to the spending limits and in return would have received a threshold level of contributions and receipts.

### **Bilingual Education**

The LPRAC monitored a bill that requires the Hartford school system to implement a pilot two-way language program in two schools. The program must provide instruction in each language for 50% of the instructional time each day. The State Department of Education and the State Board of Trustees for the Hartford School System must evaluate the program's effectiveness and report the results to the Legislature's Education Committee by July 1, 2001. (Public Act 00-204)

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**With the efforts of several Connecticut advocates and that of LPRAC we were able to defeat a bill that would have effectively allowed landlords to discriminate against prospective tenants with Section 8 vouchers . . .**

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Page 1*

open a CHET account is just \$25. This small investment will give parents, grandparents, other family members, friends, and guardians the ability to begin savings for a beloved child's future.

The CHET account has many other advantages, including:

Significant tax advantages, especially for Connecticut income tax payers.

**Flexibility:** it can be used for post-secondary nationwide (and some eligible schools abroad).

**Accessibility:** there are no residency requirements and no income or age restrictions.

The CHET program was created and is supervised by the Office of the State Treasurer and is administered by TIAA-CREF Tuition Financing, Inc. (TFI), a leading manager of state tuition programs.

For further information regarding this program, please call Dan Elminger at (888) 842-0162 extension 5704 or by e-mail at [delminger@tiaa-cref.org](mailto:delminger@tiaa-cref.org) or call Bob Greene at (800) 842-2733 extension 2711 or by e-mail at [rgreene@tiaa-cref.org](mailto:rgreene@tiaa-cref.org)

## Latino History Corner

**Joseph Marion Hernández** of Florida, representing the Whig Party, was the first Latino ever elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. It happened November 1882.

**Julio Larringa**, the first member of Congress to represent Puerto Rico, was elected in November 1904.

**Dennis Chávez of New Mexico** -- the first Latino to serve in the U.S. Senate -- was elected in 1934.

**Ileana Ros-Lehtinen**, the first-ever Latina in Congress, was elected in 1988.

Excerpt from the [Hispanic Link Weekly Report](#) a National Publication of the Hispanic Link News Services, Inc.

For information regarding the [Hispanic Link Weekly](#) please call Mr. Charlie Ericksen at (202) 234-0280 or via e-mail at [zapoteco@aol.com](mailto:zapoteco@aol.com)

CONTINUED  
FROM PAGE 3

### The University of Connecticut

Health Center is recruiting qualified candidates for several positions.

If you are interested call:

(860) 679-1135

or go online at:

<http://employ.uchc.edu/>

### LOCAL INITIATIVES SUPPORT CORPORATION

LISC is currently searching for a *Director of the Connecticut Children's Investment Partnership*.

For further information regarding this position please contact:

Andrea Pereira via e-mail at: [APereira@liscnet.org](mailto:APereira@liscnet.org)

### NUTMEG BIG BROTHERS/BIG SISTERS, INC.

Searching for a CASE MANAGER – S.T.A.R.S (Stop-Think-And-Respect-Self)

For further information regarding qualifications, responsibilities and salary questions. Please contact:

David Taylor  
Program Supervisor  
Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters  
100 Constitution Plaza,  
7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Hartford, CT 06103  
[dtaylor@bbbsnutmeg.org](mailto:dtaylor@bbbsnutmeg.org)

This position needs to be filled A.S.A.P

CONTINUES  
ON PAGE 7



## Latino Leaders Issue Call for Action

*by Fernando Betancourt and Ernie Marquez  
Summit co-chairmen*

**“Competent, caring leadership from all our citizens is essential to building a strong, effective community.”**

So begins the invitation we recently sent to LGH alumni and Latino leaders throughout the State. For nearly a year, members of the LGH Latino Leadership Development Network, working in partnership with the Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission, have been busy planning the 2000 Connecticut Latino Leadership Summit: A Call to Action Today. The summit will take place on December 8, from 8 am to 5 pm, at the Hartford Marriott Hotel in Farmington.

By informing, inspiring and connecting Latino leaders, we hope to address some of our most vexing problems more effectively. There are five areas where we expect to make a difference: education, economic development, health, civic capacity and youth. In each area, we have assembled knowledgeable experts and skilled moderators to facilitate discussions and action plans. At the end of the day, we expect to have clear, measurable outcomes to work towards over the next two years.

Setting the stage for these discussions will be two distinguished keynote presenters. In the morning, Rita DiMartino, vice president for congressional relations at AT&T, will speak to how business and community leaders can work together to address Latino issues. At lunch, Alberto Ibargüen, publisher of the Miami Herald, will speak on the key characteristics of effective leadership in a changing America. A former resident of the area, Ibargüen will also be honored for the lasting leadership contributions made during his early career in Hartford, including his role on the original LGH Steering Committee.

While the summit will be particularly meaningful for leaders and emerging leaders of the Latino community, others who wish to work with us are most welcome to attend. We are very grateful to our friends in the corporate community --many of whom will be joining us at the Summit -- for their generous support. Many thanks to **The Hartford, United Technologies, the Aetna Foundation, Chase Manhattan Bank, Fleet Bank and People's Bank** for their early and significant backing to this initiative.

Planning for the summit has revealed the enormous leadership resources in the Latino community. It is time now to grow, connect and mobilize these talents so that we may create a better community for all our constituents.

Esperamos que este 8 de Diciembre te unas a nosotros en este llamado para ser parte de la solución. In other words, answer the call and be part of the solution by joining us at the summit on December 8. Call Rita Rivera Ortíz, LGH Program Coordinator, at 951-6161 x15 ([rivera@leadershipgh.org](mailto:rivera@leadershipgh.org)) for information on how to register.

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**Competent, caring leadership from all our citizens is essential to building a strong, effective community.**

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*Continued from Page 1*

- A coalition of organizations approached us regarding the possible loss of federal funding for the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and requesting that I give testimony in support of the funding continuation. We quickly drew up some testimony based on the facts provided by such agencies as the Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Service and the Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission was present to give testimony on the benefits of the VAWA funding to Connecticut's Latino and other women.
- LPRAC was instrumental in supporting the dialogue between The Hartford Courant and Hispanic community agencies regarding strategies to improve the coverage of Latino issues as well as news stories that attract our attention. Among the many strategies discussed were: increasing the number of Hispanic reporters, accuracy in reporting and culturally sensitive approaches to market the product in our community. The panel participants included George Bahamonde, Pres. and CEO of the United Way of the Capital Area, Cesar Mejias, Owner of El Sabroso Restaurant, Frank Perez, Executive Director of the Connecticut Puerto Rican Forum and Romulo Samaniego, Executive Director of the Broad/Park Development Corporation.
- The Hartford Insurance Company asked that LPRAC be present and speak at its Hispanic Heritage Month celebration.
- We were asked to keynote at the 300th anniversary celebration at Yale University.
- We were also involved in convening a conference on education reform whereby all those who have a stake in the success of Connecticut's schools were present to help in writing a blueprint for educational reform throughout the state. The completed document will be ready in January, 2001. The keynote speaker, Jonathon Kozol, autographed copies of his latest book "Ordinary Resurrections" for conference attendees.



### Third Annual Gala-Awards Banquet

From left to right: Nelson Rodríguez, State Representatives Héctor Díaz and Evelyn Mantilla, Aracelis Vázquez, State Representative John Martinez, Carlos González, Patricia McCann-Vissepó, Executive Director Fernando Betancourt, Chairperson Ramón Arroyo, Dr. Julio Morales, and State Rep. Minnie González. (Janice Rossetti-Ford photo)

- LPRAC just finished celebrating its third annual gala awards banquet and we are still receiving calls from event participants who wish to convey congratulatory remarks on the success of the night and the caliber of the award recipients. A number of organizations provided financial support for this event including Fannie Mae, Fleet Bank, Hartford Hospital, Connecticut Light and Power, SINA, the Hartford Housing Authority, Gaffney, Bennett & Assoc. and the American Savings Bank Foundation. We are very grateful for their support and all those who advertised in our program book for the evening such as the Hispanic Yellow Pages of Hartford and Fairfield counties, the Hispanic Health Council and many members of the Connecticut State Legislature including Deputy Majority Leader John Martinez and Senate Majority Leader George Jepsen .

We are making great strides and, with your support, there is no limit to the barriers we as a united community can overcome. I look forward to your participation in all of our functions and thank you for your continued support. ¡Hasta Pronto!

CONTINUED  
FROM PAGE 5

### Associate State Director Manage AARP

Manage AARP advocacy activities in Connecticut; teaming with staff and volunteers to build partnerships with community agencies, non-profit organizations, and businesses to promote activities and advocacy issues;

recruit, train, and manage volunteers; develop, direct and participate in grassroots mobilization efforts; and represent AARP before the State Legislature and other policy makers. Requires BA degree in related discipline and 5 to 7 years of community development/advocacy experience. Excellent communication skills; strong organizational skills and demonstrated ability to

work with diverse populations a must. Spanish language ability highly desirable. Requires 50% travel within state. Job Code SC125-MH

Qualified candidates are invited to apply online at: [www.aarp.org/jobs](http://www.aarp.org/jobs) or send to Fax: (202) 434-2809, E-mail (ASCII): [resumes@aarp.org](mailto:resumes@aarp.org), Mail: AARP, 601 E Street, NW,

Washington, DC 20049.

**The LPRAC maintains a list of career opportunities in our reception area. Please contact Tersee Flores for further information at: (860) 240-8330.**



**Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission**  
**State of Connecticut**  
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Hartford, CT 06106-1591

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## CONNECTICUT LATINO LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

DECEMBER 8 2000 8 A.M. - 5 P.M.

A SUMMIT TO CONNECT, INSPIRE, AND  
STRENGTHEN DIVERSE LATINO  
LEADERS TO ADDRESS  
ISSUES OF COMMON CONCERN

FARMINGTON MARRIOTT HOTEL  
FARMINGTON, CONNECTICUT

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CALL: (860) 240-8330

## *THE LATINO & PUERTO RICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION TOASTMASTERS CLUB*

Invites you to attend our Distinguished  
Speakers Series

During the months of  
November & December 2000  
at the Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, Connecticut  
Conference Room 1-A

6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

November 14, 2000 M. Jodi Reil, Lieutenant  
Governor and Paul R. Doyle, State Representative

November 28, 2000 Nancy S. Wyman, Comptroller

December 12, 2000 Susan Bysiewicz,  
Secretary of the State

LPRAC's newsletter is published quarterly. Comments and questions may be sent to: Werner Oyanadel  
18-20 Trinity Street, Hartford, CT 06106 or e-mail [Werner.Oyanadel@po.state.ct.us](mailto:Werner.Oyanadel@po.state.ct.us)